

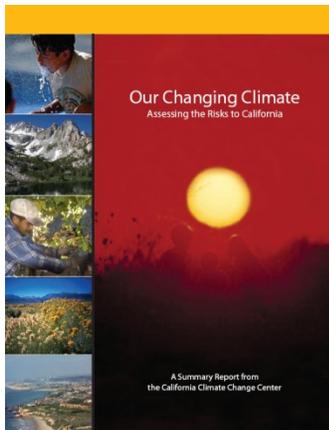
California State Agencies Collaborative Research Project

Biennial Impacts Assessments

Agencies involved and their roles: This is a large multiagency effort occurring once every two years. The California Environmental Protection Agency provides overall policy leadership for this effort. The California Energy Commission's Public Interest Energy Research program provides technical, managerial, and financial support and the following agencies provide technical guidance as members of a steering committee: Natural Resources Agency, Air Resources Board, Ocean Protection Council, Department of Public Health, Department of Food and Agriculture, Department of Water Resources, Caltrans, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, CAL FIRE, and California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Funding: The total amount of funding varies, but the Energy Commission has contributed about \$1.5 million for each assessment. The Ocean Protection Council, Air Resources Board, and California Environmental Protection Agency have provided complementary funding in the order of \$100,000 per agency.

Background Information: On June 1, 2005 the Governor signed Executive Order S-3-05, which requires, among other things, the preparation of biennial scientific reports (assessments) on the potential impacts of climate change on California. The Climate Action Team, formed by high level representatives from state agencies, is in charge of submitting these reports to the Governor and the Legislature. The Climate Action Team



released the first assessment in 2006 which included seventeen scientific manuscripts. "Our Changing Climate" is succinct document summarizing the main findings of the 2006 assessment in a non-technical language.

The second assessment, comprising of thirty-nine scientific manuscripts, was released in 2009. The 2009 assessment analyzed the potential impacts of climate change coupled with other stressors such as urbanization. The assessment provided important preliminary estimates of the economic consequences of climate change for different sectors of the economy. The second assessment and other supplementary information generated by the Public Interest Energy Research program made it clear the need for a two-pronged approach involving both mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation.

Project description: The biennial impact assessments cover a variety of sectors vulnerable to climate change such as water resources, agriculture, energy generation and consumption, and public health. They are designed not only to advance regional climate change science but also to provide tools for long-term planning and to inform climate change policy in California. For example, the assessments produce updated climate and sea level scenarios for California that are being used by local, regional, and

state agencies for long-term planning activities taking climate change into account (e.g., 5-year Forestry Plan produced by CAL FIRE).

Research coordination: As indicated before, the California Environmental Protection Agency and the California Climate Action Team provide the overall policy direction of the research scope and the Energy Commission's Public Interest Energy Research Program leads the organization and execution of the entire research effort with input and guidance from all the agencies represented in the steering committee. The steering committee assists in the design of the assessments and approves a detailed scope of work.

It is important to note that the steering committee also periodically interacts with the research groups involved in an exchange of information. This has been very useful as a knowledge transfer tool that has improved the research products but has also increased technical expertise in state government on climate change issues.

Benefits to the state: The findings of the assessments have informed climate change policy development and decision making by improving our scientific understanding of how climate may affect different sectors of the economy and also by improving our capabilities for monitoring, mitigating, and adapting to these changes.